

AMAA news

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**AMAA Interns with Vacation Bible School Children
and Leaders in Berd, Armenia (see story on pages 3-7)**



Teens at Camp Sheen Shoghik in Hankavan, Armenia having devotions in their room.

AMAA NEWS

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Editorial Message

To the Ends of the Earth

David Aynejian

Just before Jesus returned to heaven, He told the disciples that they would be His witnesses, "... *in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*" (Acts 1:8). This verse is a direct link to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20), and makes it clear that we need to spread the gospel all over the world. One of the interesting characteristics of this verse is that the Lord mentioned four specific places, and He did this to make sure that the gospel reached everyone.



Jesus was addressing the disciples in Jerusalem. By referring to Jerusalem first, Jesus was telling the disciples to begin their ministry right there, in their own backyard. He then goes on to mention Judea. Judea was the southern part of Palestine, the region that Jerusalem was in. Jesus makes the point that the disciples also need to make sure that they spread the gospel to the cities and communities surrounding Jerusalem.

The verse continues with perhaps the most interesting location, Samaria, which was located immediately north of Judea. Samaritans and Jews were bitter enemies, they hated each other. Despite this animosity, Jesus made it crystal clear that they must take the gospel to them. This really should not come as a surprise to anyone, as this was always part of Jesus' approach (Matthew 5:43-48).

He concludes by telling them to take the gospel to the ends of the earth, essentially telling them to go beyond Palestine and to spread the gospel everywhere. This is a direct tie to the Great Commission, where the disciples were told to "...*go and make disciples of all nations...*" (Matthew 28:19).

The apostles carried this out with the help of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the book of Acts and subsequent books in the New Testament, as well as non-biblical sources of history, we read how they took the gospel all over the world. We know James ministered in Jerusalem, Matthew preached the gospel in Judea, Philip preached the good news in Samaria and Thomas took the gospel to Syria and India. And of course, as Armenians, we know that Thaddeus and Bartholomew brought the gospel to Armenia. Praise God for all of this!

Christ's charge to take the gospel all over the world was not just for the apostles, but is also for us today. It is important that we know our own Jerusalem, our own Judea and our own Samaria. And, after we have addressed those areas, we need to keep going until the world has heard the good news of salvation!

We want to thank you for all your support in helping the AMAA take the gospel to all nations throughout the earth. We appreciate your financial support, and even more so your spiritual support. Our greatest resources that we can tap are your prayers, and for those we are truly grateful. □

An Opportunity of Service and Spiritual Growth

The 2011 AMAA Summer Internship Program

Rev. Nishan Bakalian

An exceptional group of 18 young interns experienced an amazing three weeks in Armenia and Lebanon this summer as part of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Internship Program. A departure from previous AMAA missions, this year's program involved college-age students and high school seniors in hands on ministry alongside local church members overseas, while also focusing on the spiritual development of these young people as rising leaders in their local churches, the AMAA, and the Armenian Evangelical Union. Leading the team were the Revs. Nishan Bakalian of Havertown, PA and Shant Barsoumian of Chicago, (now relocated to Paramus, NJ), and Anahid Dolabjian of Toronto.

The program also included Lebanon as part of the experience and seven interns elected to continue for this third week of the program. Other interns stayed on in Armenia and Karabagh for touring, family visits or further service.

Hailing from across the continent, and including two students from the Middle East, these young people and their leaders appropriately met each other for the first time on Armenian soil on July 14, gathering at the AMAA Center in Yerevan. There they attended a series of seminars designed to help them learn about modern Armenian history led by Prof. Kegham Badalian, the Evangelical Church of Armenia's past and present led by Rev. René Léonian, and the many missions and ministries of the AMAA in Armenia led by Harout Nercessian.

The interns and leaders stayed in the dorm rooms at the Evangelical Theological Seminary located within the AMAA Center. As the Center is within walking distance of the heart of Yerevan, the interns were able to venture out to see the city by day or night. Some of these ventures were organized trips, seeing the important sites in and around the city, including *Dzidzernagapert* (Genocide Memorial), *Madenataran* (Manuscript Library), Vernissage (open-air

market), Opera Square and Republic Square. Venturing farther out, the group also made excursions to Karni, Keghart, Khor Virab and Etchmiadzin Cathedral. On several evenings they had an opportunity to dine together at restaurants reflective of the cultural heritage of village life. For most of the interns this was their first visit to Armenia, so seeing and hearing about these historic places made an indelible impression on them.

Interns Connect With Homeland

The most memorable part of the group's time came after the Sunday worship service in Yerevan. They divided into two groups to travel in opposite directions but with the same mission: to support ministry teams preparing Vacation Bible School programs at the Evangelical Churches/ AMAA Centers in Armavir and Berd. Rev. Barsoumian and Anahid Dolabjian led the Armavir team, while Rev. Bakalian took charge of the Berd team. In each location, the interns began with a day of planning, strategizing how they would help out with the program, and getting to know their fellow leaders in the local church. This was followed by five days of rewarding and energizing interaction with 80 to 100 or more children, ages 6 to 12, at each site. The interns stepped in as necessary to assist with crafts (having brought materials with them), or teach a memory verse, or share a testimony, or guide them in a game or race. They learned to be flexible, but they also learned to see the simple faith of these children, many of whom live in poverty.

They witnessed poverty close up as they paid visits to the homes of children and elderly sponsored by the AMAA. Some of what they saw was humbling; some of it saddening, and other times it was bewildering. Yet all of the interns





expressed amazement at the power of faith in Jesus that these brothers and sisters possessed. Because of the riches they shared with these fellow-believers, they began to consider how much in their daily lives at home is unnecessary.

Interns Reunite and Celebrate

After participating in worship services in Armavir and Ijevan, the group reunited at a drizzly Lake Sevan the following Sunday. It was clear that each of them had experienced an inner change. Though geographically distant, they were nonetheless more deeply connected than when they had parted seven days earlier. As they toured the island with its edifices so significant to the deep roots of Christianity in Armenia, and celebrated the baptism of one of their members in the rough waters of the lake, they were glad to continue this pilgrimage together.

Over the next week, the interns took three trips to the AMAA's Camp Sheen-Shoghik in Hankavan to be part of a junior youth ("Badanyats") retreat. With 175 young people and dozens of leaders and helpers, they found many opportunities to participate in the worship services, evening programs, sports contests, craft times, and informal conversations during those days. On their last visit, they joined forces to help the camp staff clean the grounds of this sprawling center which is in need of much repair and upgrading. They were hopeful for all that is being done there, and glad that they played a small part in this crucial camping ministry.

Realizing that this special time of serving and growing had drawn to a close, the interns said heartfelt and somewhat tearful goodbyes on July 29, promising to keep in touch with each other and encouraging one another to build on these experiences. Now, a smaller group prepared to travel to Lebanon for the third week of their internship.

Six Days in Lebanon

Much like the experience in Armenia, the next six days in Lebanon afforded the interns an opportunity to visit churches and institutions, serve in a VBS program, visit needy families, and see the country that has such a major role to play in the AMAA's work and in our Armenian Evangelical identity. The group of nine, including seven interns and two leaders, stayed at the newly renovated Bezjian Building in the KCHAG conference center outside of Beirut, and

descended to the city each day for a variety of activities.

On Sunday, the group split up and worshiped with the Armenian Evangelical congregations in Ashrafieh and Nor Marash, sharing their fresh experiences and impressions of Armenia at each worship service. That fellowship continued in the evening as youth of the Christian Endeavor ("Chanits") groups gathered informally in KCHAG for a time of worship and sharing. Later that week, the interns along with the youth from Nor Marash joined the youth group at the Emmanuel church in Nor Amanos for another time of sharing, worship and prayer. The opportunities for Christian fellowship were frequent and refreshing in those few days.

The main ministry effort of the interns was at the Social Service Center in Trad, a section of Bourj Hammoud where many low income Armenian families reside. Each morning, the "Garmir Khoump" ("Red Team", as the children called them) descended on the playground to interact with the children, listen to their stories, play games, and even roughhouse with them. They joined in their worship time, taught some songs, assisted at snack time, and helped them do their craft projects. It was evident that although these, too, were Armenian children, they seemed more hardened and street-wise than their counterparts in Armenia. Yet the gospel message was the same, and the children were eager to learn and share what they learned. For the "Red Team" it was only a taste of their six week long program, which serves over 100 children ages 4 to 12.

In Beirut, the group was able to enjoy the renovated downtown area, ate many local delicacies, walked through modern shopping malls, and even swam in the Mediterranean at a beach in Jounieh. They saw firsthand the remnants of civil strife there. To help them interpret and understand that, they had informal seminars with the President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, the Rev. Mgrdich Karagoezian, and during their visit to Haigazian University, with its President, the Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian. It was a good opportunity to become familiarized, partly on foot, with the Near East School of Theology, American University, Hamra Street, Raouche and more.

On their last full day, the group traveled to Ainjar, and saw not only the churches and schools, they also learned about its

ancient past as they took a guided tour of the Umayyad citadel. Rev. Raffi Messerlian, Pastor and Principal of the Armenian Evangelical Church and School, explained how Armenians came to settle in the middle of the Bekaa Valley, and how they maintain their identity in a sometimes difficult environment. Reaching the gravesite of the Rev. Dikran Antreassian, the interns learned about the heroic defense of Musa Dagh. Their excursion came to a memorable end with a traditional Lebanese feast beside a fish filled spring.

God was at work throughout this Internship project, from the planning and selection process to the final reflection papers the interns submitted. His guidance and inspiration were evident in those at work in the AMAA headquarters in Paramus. His care was felt through the ministry of the staff and pastors in Yerevan, Armavir, Berd, Ijevan and Hankavan to the group.

That care was experienced afresh in the pastors, leaders and volunteers in the Armenian Evangelical churches in Lebanon. It was a privilege for my co-leaders and me to be part of this extraordinary program of the AMAA. We look forward to similar experiences and divine blessings in the coming years.

It must also be said that the work of the interns as missionaries and ambassadors for Christ has enabled them to be a blessing to the Armenian Evangelical churches and AMAA ministries overseas and here in North America. It has given them an opportunity to know firsthand the rich cultural heritage and the critical challenges facing their fellow Armenians in



the homeland and in the Middle East. And, as a core aspect of this ministry centered internship, these young people are continuing to grow in their spiritual lives and to see their faith as a tool in God's hand to care for their world, at home or wherever God leads them. □

Reflections of the AMAA Interns

Here is a glimpse of some of the blessings, inspirations and lessons God brought to this summer's Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Internship Program in the words of the interns themselves (compiled by Rev. Nishan Bakalian):

The Armenian Missionary Association of America organized a wonderful Internship Program during the summer of 2011...I can honestly say that the trip turned out to be a blessing in my life, and I wish that the trip never ended...I participated in the Armenia portion of the internship, and now regret not choosing to go to the optional part of the Internship Program held in Lebanon...Although we provided supplies for crafts, were group leaders, taught games and Bible verses, our main service was toward the (AMAA-sponsored) family...visitations that we were involved in.

(Tamar Melkonian, Fresno, CA)

This Internship Program definitely planted a seed of ministry in me. One outstanding event that changed me forever was a visit to a...family (who) lived in extremely poor conditions...Even though they lack so much, they have so much faith...They live day by day knowing that Christ will strengthen them and give them what they need...I want to help as much as possible...in the work that the AMAA is doing in our people's lives...It's up to us to go and share the message of hope and peace.

(Vahé Jébégian, Nicosia, Cyprus)

One thing that I was surprised about was how the local Armenians were dedicated toward worshiping God in Armenia...I believe this because several of the churches there were not originally built as churches...When I see these repurposed buildings as churches, I see them as obstacles that the locals have overcome...They have supplied themselves with a place of worship, and it might not be as grand as some of the churches...but it shows that they are humble to accept any place of worship.

(Ernest Walter, Morton, PA)

I had to change completely to honor what God had showed me...I feel that meeting the families that were already being helped by the AMAA were the most impacting experiences not only for me, but for my fellow interns...Witnessing one of the sponsored (families) of AMAA and getting to know what they have to live through firsthand...inspired me to turn to AMAA...with my skills in photography, prepare a portfolio, (and) start on my goal of working for the AMAA ...to serve God's children in Armenia.

(Armen Zardaryan, Panorama City, CA)

As I served the children in Berd...I said to myself, "These are the future leaders of this town, and possibly this country." We must continue to minister...in places where there is no VBS or camp because (they) are the children who will grow to change the social landscape of our homeland Armenia...My biggest hope one day, God willing, is to go back to Armenia and Berd for a long period of time and give them my support (in) any way possible in my ministry, so that God's glory may be visible in that country...If I had a million dollars to spend in Armenia, I would... build a new facility for all the poor people in Berd to worship God in a cleaner, larger and more attractive environment...and have much more room for summer VBS children and... strengthen people's faith in God.

(Taniel Kalaydjian, Richmond Hill, Ont.)



Each place we visited, each child we played with and each family we ate with gave me a strong understanding about how the people there are so gracious and thankful for us, but more importantly for God...The steadfastness of faith in these people is unbelievable, even though some live in the hardest of conditions...This trip challenged me in ways I never thought it would, but it was incredible how much I was changed in the course of three weeks...Even with the language barrier, I couldn't wait to go to the Vacation Bible Schools and tell the children about God, and who He was, and how much He cares and loves them...My time with God was much stronger as each day went by...Unprepared to spend time on myself and my relationship with God, the quiet time and devotionals brought me closer to Him and made my experience that much more touching.

(Ani Parseghian, Arlington, MA)

One of the many positive experiences (of the AMAA Internship Program) is the opportunity for human interaction...Participating in Vacation Bible School gave me a chance to communicate with the children of Armenia...It was interesting to see the young people in the town of Armavir relaxed and enjoying the simple pleasures of life without phones, computers or televisions...As a visitor from outside I saw it as a simpler life with not as many distractions, but more worries because of their condition...There are so many areas in this world where we can have an opportunity to give of ourselves...A group of four of us visited an elderly woman living in poor conditions who had an abusive, alcoholic son...When we were at her home... that son showed up ranting and raving, threatening to physically harm her...(But) when I saw her and the grandson...in church, worshipping with a smile on their faces, I realized that their faith was tremendously strong despite the problems they have. Instead of choosing to blame God, they chose to follow Him.

(David Filian, Paramus, NJ)

The first reason for going on this trip is for living out God's glory in another country...Anything that could tamper with that reason should be kept out of the way...God's voice is indeed louder without such distractions, and you will feel like you have more time in the day to glorify him...If you feel like you're worthless during VBS, remember that God could be working where you least expect it...Most important of all: pray. Pray for God to speak to you on this trip, for his protection, and for His support.

(Vazken Avetissian, Pasadena, CA)

The devotionals were the times when we got our energy and strength from God; we were being filled with hope and we knew that He was with us in everything that we were doing...One important purpose of this trip was the spiritual growth we acquired...Being away from home and being away from our normal lifestyle helped us to grab on to God and feel His importance in our lives...Spending time with God is vital if you want to have a better relationship with Him...This internship was an opportunity to make great friends...I have many new brothers and sisters in Christ that I can't thank God enough for them!...Different people from different places add something new to the group and the trip, so being in a group of young Christians was very encouraging and I felt really at home!...I thank God that He gave me the opportunity to grow, help, experience and serve in His field.

(Garin Haidostian, Beirut, Lebanon)

Trust in God in all your daily activities and never forget to thank Him because Armenia really changes a person...The history and culture alone capture something inside of a person and truly attach them to the land...The people of Armenia do not smile as much as we do... (but) it is important not to forget to take a look at how the people are happier and praise God for every little thing they are given and have...The people there do not complain as much as we do and amazingly they are less stressed than we are.

(Janik Oganessian, Fresno, CA)

We first met the local leaders, who were so excited to see us and show us what they had planned...Each leader exuded such a vibrant joy, enthusiasm and genuine love for the Lord that was contagious...Despite their non-existent funds and humble accommodations, they were strong as a team and strong in their mission for teaching the children about their Father in Heaven...They were so organized, well prepared, and efficient!...Their faith and love for the Lord was so real, as they demonstrated Christ in such magnificent yet humble ways... I learned a lot about using spiritual gifts appropriately and intentionally...Each member of our AMAA group in turn came away enriched and challenged by simply watching the faith of these people who had nothing, yet everything to give...The power of the Love of Christ is truly amazing!... It breaks through the walls of culture, language and sin and pierces right to the heart...What a blessing it has been to learn such a lesson through such an unforgettable and powerful experience!

(Jasmine Fereshetian, Dresher, PA)

Thinking back, the most important thing that I packed was something that I would not have considered very essential at the beginning of the trip...This thing surprisingly was my journal... At the beginning of the internship I wrote in it as a necessity... However, as the trip progressed I started also recording my feelings and thoughts into this book...It became a sort of outlet for my thoughts and concerns... Little by little this journal writing moved one step further into letter writing, but not just any letters...By the end of the trip I felt as if I was writing letters to God... This trip has pushed me to not only have more "quiet time" like I had in Berd but also to make journal

writing an essential part of it...(The children's) joy and eagerness to be at VBS was overwhelming and very encouraging...I felt more connected to these children than I had ever been with the children back home. The love those children had for God was undeniable and is what will make them unforgettable.

(Kamie Arabian, Toronto, Ont.)

The week spent in Armavir brought many challenges our way... At some moments, the language barrier was frustrating because it was so difficult to get your point across...Their living conditions were very different from ours and what I found to be normal, they found to be unnecessary or had an alternative...One experience that...has strengthened my faith was a visitation to a house that the AMAA sponsored...She was a little old woman in her 70s who we called Dadig....She lived in a tiny little house and almost had nothing...Her husband, family members and friends had passed away, she hardly had any possessions, but all she had was her son, grandson and her faith...Her simply sharing her life story that she had no reason at all to be happy or smile, but she thanked God everyday for what she did have was inspiring enough...I took a look at my own life and realized how self-centered and ungrateful I can be...The more she kept sharing her faith with us, the more I found her to be a true inspiration to me...You should always turn to God and thank Him for all the amazing things that He has done for you in your life.

(Karine Adourian, Markham, Ont.)

This past summer provided some of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life...It also provided me with some insight into my own character, both strengths and weaknesses, struggles and triumphs...I felt able to act as a kind of assistant leader...helping everyone process their experiences by listening to them...On the bright side, my dealings with the children at the Vacation Bible School were nothing short of marvelous...They were enthusiastic, loving, energetic, and encouraging to be around... I showed them love, and treated them as people worthy of attention, and they recognized that and responded to it...Their persistent calls for personal attention from me tell me that they saw me as someone who took them seriously...There were trials and successes of equal measure throughout the internship... and I can't wait to try my hand at it all again.

(Sevag Bakalian, Havertown, PA)

This trip has opened my eyes to appreciate and to realize that in my motherland there were families and children who...do not have anything, but yet give Praise to our Lord...The Bible was the most important thing that I packed for this experience...The reason why I state this is because there were plenty of times when I was scared and felt homesick, but by reading my Bible throughout those times made me less scared...Morning devotions with the group in Yerevan and in Armavir were a major help for me for two different reasons...The first reason was that it made me strong and fearless and the second reason is that it made me stronger with Christ...Through Him I went and served in His most powerful glorious name...Armenia was not a mistake!...Behind every trip there is a reason, whether God showed me the reason in Armenia or (will) in the future, I want to serve Him.

(Sareen Adourian, Scarborough, Ont.)

Our group of interns arrived together at the AMAA headquarters as strangers, but by the end of the trip it seemed stranger to be without each other...We came to serve and instead learned the real meaning of service...We came to give hope and learned what real hope is! ... Many of the families and people I met and spoke to were in saddening situations, and they just wanted to be heard, for someone to listen...But my hopeful encounters were very much the same encounters, because in each and every one of these stories there was hope... their unwavering faith in God to provide them with a better future manifested by the presence of the AMAA in their lives...They lived simply and much less wastefully compared to us, but happily with their families at home and at church...I felt there was much to learn from their lifestyles...Going to Armenia I thought I would be staying only a short time...When I left Armenia, I knew one thing: I would be leaving only for a short time...I would be back.

(Ari Jon Filian, Berkeley, CA)



Haigazian University

Conducts 51st Commencement Exercises

Mira Yardemian, HU Public Relations Director

On July 1, 2011, Haigazian University proudly graduated 150 students in the First Armenian Evangelical Church courtyard in Beirut.

The ceremony honored students from the faculties of Business Administration and Economics, Humanities, Sciences and Social and Behavioral Sciences with BA and BS degrees, including 14 students with Masters degrees in the faculties of Business Administration and Economics and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Government Minister Panos Manjian represented the President of the Republic, the President of the Council of Ministers and the Speaker of the Parliament. Among the attendees were MP Jean Oghasabian, representing former Prime Minister Saad Hariri, MPs Dr. Bassem Shabb, Serge Toursarkissian, Sebouh Kalpakian, Armenian Ambassador Ashod Kotcharian, US Public Affairs Officer Ryan Gliha, The USAID Director, Dr. Jim Barnhart, in addition to representatives of the Commander of the Army and the Chief of Internal Security, the President of the Supreme Council of the Evangelical Community in Syria and Lebanon, Rev. Salim Sahyouni, Archbishop Kegham Khatcherian, former ministers and MPs, diplomats, clergy, members of the Board of Trustees, parents, relatives and friends, all in all more than 1,100 guests.

The ceremony started as the faculty and graduates marched through the crowd of parents, relatives and friends to the celebratory processional march “Pomp and Circumstance” by Sir Edward Elgar, followed by the Lebanese National Anthem, and the Invocation by the Campus Minister, Rev. W. Gregory Lee-Parker. University President Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian focused his word on the need to find stability and balance in the hectic world we live in. Rev. Dr. Haidostian noted that this was an important message of the University, as Haigazian University “has directly and indirectly taught that balance is a value we should cherish... It is a critical need of life for good judgment and good quality, and it gives both a deep and a wide perspective in life.” Rev. Dr. Haidostian concluded by saying “balance in one’s views requires a standpoint, but a standpoint is not only a point. It is a point which helps you stand: today, alone, with others, and tomorrow, in all circumstances.”

The keynote speaker, Michel Goguikian, a successful international banker and financier of Lebanese - Armenian origins, as well as an avid philanthropist and founder of the Goguikian Foundation, spoke to the Haigazian graduates about his life experiences in South America.

Sharing the important elements that enabled him to succeed, Mr. Goguikian stressed the importance of expecting and preparing for adversity and learning to work through it. Moreover, he underscored “the invaluable role of passion” and finding it in all that one does.



Mr. Goguikian, who is actively involved in a number of charitable foundations that particularly support higher education, also addressed the importance of giving back to society. “As graduates of one of Lebanon’s most prestigious universities, you should not forget your responsibility toward society and moral obligations toward your country,” he concluded.

Following the keynote address, Registrar Anahid Fermanian and Deans Fadi Asrawi and Arda Ekmekji presented the graduates who received their degrees from President Haidostian.

In her valedictorian address, Dima Matta, speaking in English, hailed Haigazian as “a refuge, a haven of scholarship and a shelter of fellowship and camaraderie.” She spoke of the challenge to overcome all obstacles through Haigazian’s motto of “truth, freedom and service.” Rather than settling for “a tomorrow filled with ashes,” Matta urged her fellow graduates to actively “dust” the ashes off.

Valedictorian Garo Keurkunan addressed his fellow graduates in Arabic, reflecting on the gifts that Haigazian had given him and all other graduates in preparing them for the life ahead. He expressed his gratitude to Haigazian for providing its students with a most rewarding and well-rounded education, as well as preparing them for the challenges of professional life. He concluded with a promise to his country Lebanon, to be faithful and grateful no matter the distances that may separate them.

After singing the Alma Mater, the ceremony ended with the Benediction given by the President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Rev. Megrdoch Karagoezian.

The class of 2011 threw their caps high into the air as blue and orange balloons flew overhead. The graduates then walked proudly out with the recessional “Trumpet Tune” by Henry Purcell, eager to move to the Mugar and the New Heritage Building gardens and take memorable pictures with their friends and families to commemorate this special day.

The Baccalaureate Service was held on June 26, 2011, in the First Armenian Evangelical Church in Beirut. □

Avedisian School in Yerevan Holds

Year-End Program and Graduation

The Avedisian School held its Graduation Program on June 21 at the Armenian Evangelical Center on Baghramian Street, in Yerevan, Armenia, with the presence of the sponsors of the School, Edward and Pamela Avedisian.

The Program began with greetings from the Principal Melanya Keghamyan, followed with a presentation by the Kindergarten students of the “Forest’s Alphabet” (Andarayeen Aypoupen), a play written by famous children’s poet Souren Mouradian and staged and directed by Nouné Abrahamyan. Following the play, the Principal thanked poet Souren Mouradian, who was present, and conveyed her gratitude for his collaboration with the School by presenting him with a special gift. The second part of the Program included a variety of Armenian poetry and songs presented by the various grades of the School.

In his remarks, Edward Avedisian expressed his compliments to the entire staff of the School and the students, congratulated them for completing yet another successful school year and said: “the education of the new generation is the basis of human civilization, from which we, as well as our mother land will benefit in the coming years. My wish is that you will become worthy citizens of the Republic of Armenia and with your work help our country to flourish even more. Always be kind with impeccable character, and bring honor to this educational institution.”

Mrs. Keghamyan thanked the Avedisians for their love and continuous support of the School, and, on behalf of the staff, promised to keep the education of the school at a high level.

Twenty two children graduated from the Kindergarten and each received a school bag full of school supplies. Twenty nine students graduated from the Elementary school and eighteen students graduated from the 9th grade, and will be transferred to a different school next year to continue their education. □



L to R: Pamela and Edward Avedisian, benefactors of the School, with Mrs. Melanya Keghamyan, Principal.

Merdinian School's Year-End Program and Graduation

This year, the Armenian Evangelical Merdinian School of Sherman Oaks, CA held its year-end Program on June 26 to confer diplomas to 18 students from the Elementary Section and 11 students from the Middle School. The invocation was presented by Rev. Joseph Matossian, Minister to the Armenian Evangelical Union of America. The students had prepared a lovely program of recitations and songs both in Armenian and English. On behalf of the School Board, Dr. Vahe Nalbandian welcomed the audience and in his congratulatory remarks spoke about the future plans of the School. He also thanked the Principal Hovsep Inejikian for his dedicated service to the School. He will be leaving the School to become Principal of Sahag Mesrob School in Pasadena, CA.

The Keynote speaker was Rev. Joseph Matossian. Rev. Matossian encouraged the graduates and said: "Dream, but may your dreams be logical. Work hard, love the education and don't give in to your surroundings."

In his closing remarks, Mr. Inejikian thanked the parents for entrusting their children to the care of Merdinian School, congratulated the graduates and praised God for yet another successful year at Merdinian. He also thanked the staff and all the committees who helped the School both morally and financially. He then directed his remarks to the students saying: "keep these four words with you always – Armenian, Armenia, Armenian language, and faith. Do not forget your mother tongue. Speak with it, sing with it and pray with it. And last, but not least, be faithful to your forefather's Christian faith, and do not forget, that God is going to be with you in all your difficult circumstances."

The program ended with the Benediction given by Rev. Joseph Matossian.

The year-end program and graduation ceremony for the Kindergarten class was held on June 17 in the School's auditorium. □



Letter to the Editor

Today I received the latest AMAA News. I immediately sat down to read it. Of course, the first thing was your message, "Called to Go and Do Likewise." I wish everyone, members or friends, were as moved by the message.

The way we are living these days, they are forgetting how important love really is. It seems people are thinking "I'm important" so you should pay attention to me whether or not showing love is not my choice.

Wish everyone could read your message and maybe there wouldn't be so much hate.

Thank you for your message as well as the other news. So many pictures of acquaintances brought back so many memories.

*Rachel Dohanian
Belmont, MA*



Year-End Programs and Graduations

of the Armenian Evangelical Schools in the Middle East

The month of June was filled with year-end Programs and Graduations in all of the Armenian Evangelical Schools in the Middle East – Lebanon, Syria and Greece. Congratulations to all our graduates!



Armenian Evangelical College, Beirut, Lebanon



Armenian Evangelical Shamlian-Tatigian Secondary School, Nor Marash (Bourdj Hammoud), Lebanon



Armenian Evangelical Central High School, Ashrafieh (Bourdj Hammoud), Lebanon



Armenian Evangelical Secondary School, Ainjar, Lebanon



Armenian Evangelical P. & E. Torossian School, Nor Amanos (Bourdj Hammoud), Lebanon



Armenian Evangelical Gertmenian School, Beirut, Lebanon



Armenian Evangelical Kindergarten, Athens, Greece



Armenian Evangelical Bethel High School, Aleppo, Syria

AMAA Concludes Another Successful Camp Season In Armenia and Karabagh

Since 1990, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), in cooperation with the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA), has been organizing summer camps in Armenia and Karabagh for thousands of children, teens and youth. Thousands of children come to a healthy environment and receive both physical and spiritual nourishment, play games, participate in sports activities, do arts and crafts, socialize and, most of all, learn about the Love of God.

The summer camps were held in two AMAA camp sites: AMAA Camp Sheen Shoghik in the Hankavan regions of Armenia and AMAA Camp Bedrosian in Shoushi, Karabagh. Camp Sheen Shoghik served a total of 1,400 children, teens and youth from June 23 – August 9, and Camp Bedrosian served 600 children, teens and youth from June 17-July 17. In addition, the AMAA also organized Daily Vacation Bible Schools (DVBS) in 53 locations, six of which were organized by Hope for Armenia of France. Some 3,500 children from Armenia and 300 children from Karabagh participated in the DVBS programs.

Prior to the Summer Camp programs, 230 camp counselors, who were selected by the ECA Christian Education Department, attended a four-day training session/seminar to prepare the final camp programs. The goal of this seminar was not only aimed to train the counselors, but also to get to know each other as they were coming from different town and cities.

The AMAA summer camp programs are designed to share the love of Jesus in practical ways – learning, enhancing their talents, socializing, meeting new friends and being nourished in a Christian atmosphere filled with loving care. The daily camp



Top and bottom: Children at Camp Sheen Shoghik in Hankavan, Armenia.



Play Time at Camp Bedrosian in Shoushi, Karabagh.



Boys Bedroom in Camp Bedrosian in Shoushi, Karabagh.

activities included morning exercises, worship services, biblical/moral lessons, arts and crafts, outdoor games and sport activities, discussion of topics of interests, and at the end of the day, a variety of other programs, such as a talent show, indoor games, national songs, dramas, etc.

In addition to Christian education, the campers are also taught national values through national songs, stories about national heroes and various cultural events. Moreover, one of the camps dedicated a day to the Armenian national culture.

Every year, AMAA's Summer Camp Committee organizes events in North America to raise funds for these camps. The AMAA spends over \$100,000 annually to organize summer camps in Armenia and Karabagh, as well as in other countries, such as Bulgaria, Lebanon, Syria and the United States. Besides the funds to run the summer camps, the camp sites need constant maintenance and renovation to keep the facilities safe and up to date. Those who want to support these camps and be part of these vital programs, can contact the AMAA at 31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652; Tel. 201.265.2607; e-mail: amaa@amaa.org ☐



DVBS in Stepanavan, Armenia.



DVBS in Ardeni, Armenia.



DVBS in Arakadzavan, Armenia.



DVBS in Dilijan, Armenia.



DVBS in Ayntap-Masis, Armenia



DVBS in Gyumri, Armenia

Four Churches and Centers

Undergo Renovations in Armenia

During the summer months, four churches and centers in Armenia, with assistance from the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA,) underwent much needed renovations and new additions.

Artashat

Artashat is the regional center of the Ararat Region. The population is about 30,000. The Evangelical Church of Armenia in Artashat was founded in 2000. Currently the Church is under full renovation which will include a new central heating system, new lighting, a new entrance area, new sanctuary, and a new bathroom including a new toilet and shower.



Shirakamout

Shirakamout is located in the Lori Region. A complete renovation of the Evangelical Church of Armenia in Shirakamout, founded in 2001, took place this summer. New emergency doors, new lighting, flooring, a stage, new doors and windows were added. The round auditorium is split into two; one half is the sanctuary and the other half includes new classrooms, offices and bathrooms.



Ashtarak

Ashtarak was one of the ancient towns of Armenia. It is the center of the Aragadzotn Region. The population is about 21,475 people. The Evangelical Church of Armenia in Ashtarak, founded in 2002, completely renovated the first floor, including the sanctuary. A former movie theater, the renovation included lighting and an electric room, plus two offices and the narthex and new doors and windows. The second floor of the Church will be converted into an apartment.



Artik

Artik is located in the Shirak Region. The population is about 6,000. The Evangelical Church was founded in 2001. Recently the roof of the Center/Church was totally renovated.



Medical Mission Team

Travels to Armenia



In June, a Medical Mission team, led by Dr. Al and Sue Phillips staffed ambulatory clinics in Vanadzor and Stepanavan, Armenia. The team of 23 included two physicians, a physician's assistant, two pharmacists, nursing and medical students and 15 essential ancillary workers.

The team used the Vanadzor Evangelical Church and the AMAA Social Service Center in Stepanavan for its headquarters. Patients came from local neighborhoods and many were transported by bus from outlying villages. Over the course of the week, 701 patients were seen. This included 530 adults, 76 children and 95 patients who only required reading glasses. Common conditions included hypertension, diabetes and musculoskeletal problems. Purchased



medications from donations allowed for an extensive pharmacy and patients received drugs without charge. While waiting to be seen, children were taught Bible stories and participated in craft projects. Donated toothbrushes and other oral hygiene items were distributed and patients were taught how to maintain good dental health. Patients were also encouraged to attend services at local evangelical churches, where the good news of Jesus Christ was preached. Many were touched both physically and spiritually.

"During His ministry, Jesus often met the physical needs of those He met," said Dr. Phillips. "We are committed to emulating His love in Armenia."

Dr. Phillip's Medical Mission team has committed to return to Armenia in 2012. Volunteers, both medical and non-medical Armenian and non-Armenian speaking, who are interested in serving our brothers and sisters, or who are interested in financially supporting our mission, may contact Dr. Phillips at ajphillips@pol.net for more information. □

Dr. Robert Gertmenian Burns

Heads Plastics Mission to Armenia

In May, a team of physicians and medical personnel, led by Dr. Robert Gertmenian Burns of Orange County, CA, travelled to Armenia as part of the Plastics Foundation's 18th Annual Mission Trip. The Plastics Foundation is a volunteer organization dedicated to providing life changing plastic surgery for children with birth defects, congenital malformations and traumatic disfigurements. Families of these children both at home and around the world are unable to afford these services and some of the children are orphans. The team of surgeons helps to reshape the children's lives and helps them face a better future.

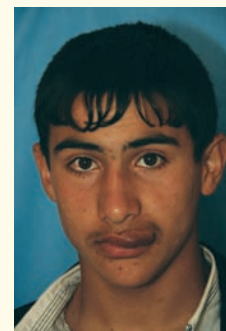


On this Mission, over 350 children were pre-screened and 60 children received surgery to successfully correct abnormalities such as cleft lip, cleft palate or burns. The Plastics Foundation plans to return to Armenia next year because of the great need they found there. □

Plastics and the Armenian Team operate on two children simultaneously.



2 year-old Nver Grigoryan before and after surgery.



14 year-old Arzumán Ghazaryan before and after surgery.

Fred and Doris Simonian Celebrate 50th Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations and best wishes to AMAA Board of Directors member Fred Simonian and his wife, Doris, who recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary!

Fred has been an active supporter of AMAA activities and missions for many years. He is currently a member of the AMAA Board of Directors, Class of 2011 and also serves on the AMAA Executive, Budget & Finance and Development Committees as well as serving as Chair of the Personnel Committee. He served as a member of the AEUNA Board from 1998 to 2008 and as Chairman of the AEUNA Stewardship and Investment Committee.

Fred and Doris are devoted members of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago, IL. He served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees and as a member of the Church's Joint Board since 1991. He also served as general contractor for the Church during renovations in the mid 2000's. Doris has been involved in the Church since she was a young child and is a member of the Daughters of Vartan.

Fred is retired from Dial Corporation where he worked as Director of Engineering and Technical Services. He currently owns and manages a consulting firm in the field of soaps, cosmetics, detergents and fats and oils processing and is a recognized expert worldwide in the field of soap technology.



Fred and Doris are the proud parents of three children, Jackie, Christine and Dr. Philip Simonian and eight grandchildren.

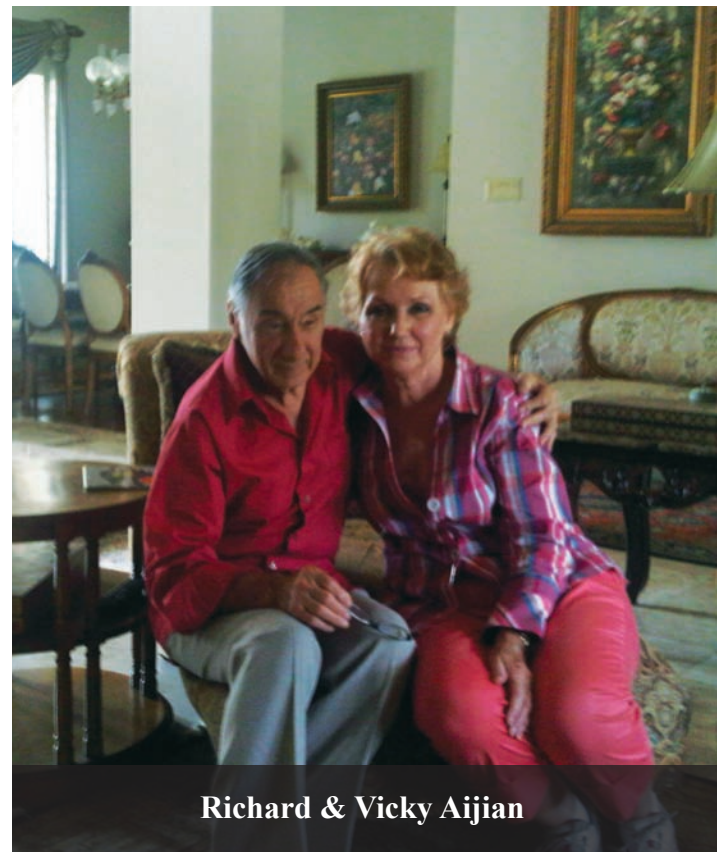
"Fred has been and continues to be a valuable resource to the AMAA," said Levon Filian, Executive Director of the AMAA. "We truly treasure his support and friendship and wish him and Doris much happiness in the coming years." □

The Executive Director Visits the Aijian and Munroe Families

In July, AMAA Executive Director Levon Filian visited the Aijian and Munroe families in San Antonio, Texas. He thanked them for their family's generous support to the AMAA over the years. They fondly spoke about their uncle Stephen Philibosian, their Aunt Ruth Philibosian and their cousins Joyce Philibosian Stein and Louise Philibosian Danelian. □



Richard & Vicky Aijian and Elizabeth & Tom Munroe



Richard & Vicky Aijian

Ordination Service of Gary Karamanoukian

Hagop Basmadjian

The ordination service of Gary Karamanoukian took place on August 21 at the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal in the presence of a large gathering of members from various churches, family and friends. The service was conducted by several clergymen headed by Rev. Joe Matossian, Minister of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, who will also conduct the installation service when Rev. Karamanoukian takes his position as the pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Chicago.

Before the ordination service, Gary's newborn son Michael was dedicated to God by Rev. George Dabbo of the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal.

After opening words of welcome and readings from the scriptures, Rev. Krikor Garabedian from Toronto delivered the sermon in Armenian. The text of the sermon was taken from 2nd Timothy 4 in which the Apostle Paul exhorts his young assistant, Timothy, to preach God's word boldly. Rev. Garabedian exhorted Gary "to live near God"; "to live near the word of God"; "to live near God's people" and "to live near your own soul." Carolyn Hanenian sang solo an inspiring hymn in Armenian entitled "I Shall Always Live for Thee."

The exhortation to the ordinand was delivered by Rev. Dabbo, who encouraged Mr. Karamanoukian "to plant the seeds of God's word always and everywhere"; "to love always"; "to forgive always" and above all "to remain faithful to his family until the end." Rev. Dabbo also reminded Gary that he too is soil and must not neglect to always nourish his soul with God's word.

The message in English was delivered by Rev. Dr. Amar Djaballah who took his theme from 2nd Timothy 3. Rev. Djaballah stressed that "God is sovereign"; "God is grace", and that these

two represent "the two dimensions of God."

The exhortation to the congregation was delivered by Rev. Sam Albarian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto.

During the swearing-in ceremony, Rev. Matossian asked Gary several questions that were intended to probe his readiness for the serious calling of shepherding God's flock. After responding to all questions affirmatively, all clergymen present laid their hands on Gary while praying. It was at the end of this ceremony that Gary's title changed from "Mister" to "Reverend."

Following the final Benediction by Rev. Karamanoukian, a reception was held in the church basement in a warm and cozy atmosphere that provided the opportunity for fellowship between all present. (On a personal note, the writer of this report had the privilege of being the first person to address Gary as "Badveli" at the start of the reception).

Rev. Gary comes from a prominent family. The Karamanoukians trace their ancestry to Aintab, Cilicia. He was born 36 years ago in Montreal and began attending the First Evangelical Church in 2004. He received his theological education at "Faculte de Theologie Evangelique", which is affiliated with Acadia University. He did his internship at the First Church and was particularly active with the Youth Group. Rev. Gary is married to Gassia Tchobanian and the couple has three children: Karoun, Immanuel and Michael. □



AMAA Awards \$130,000 in Scholarships to U.S. and Canada Students

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) provides scholarships to students who attend colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. This year, the Scholarship Committee, chaired by Robert S. Hekemian, Jr., reviewed over 80 applicants and granted \$130,000 in scholarships to 60 students for the 2011-2012 school year.

"I want to express my gratitude for making the AMAA scholarship available. I feel very honored to be a recipient," wrote Karni Semerjian upon hearing that the AMAA had granted her a scholarship to help her in her studies. "Thanks to your generous grant, I will not have to spend so much time worrying about financial aspects of college, and will focus on academics." Karni is a student attending Boston University.

For the last 90 years, the AMAA has helped thousands of students from kindergarten to high school with tuition aid and hundreds of college students with scholarships. Aid has also been given directly to schools and institutions of higher education, including Haigazian University and the Near East School of Theology (NEST) in Beirut.

The AMAA scholarships are provided from special endowment and scholarship funds established by donors who treasure educational excellence and achievements. We thank our sponsors and donors for establishing these funds.

Qualified students can request scholarship applications in writing from AMAA headquarters in Paramus, NJ starting in January of each year. The deadline to submit applications for the 2012-2013 academic year is May 1, 2012. □

165 Տարիներու Աւանդ Մեզ Յառաջ Մղելու

Վեր. Մկրտիչ Գարակէօզեան*

Այսօր, մինչ կը տօնենք Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիի 165-ամեակը, մեր սրտերը եւ մտքերը լեցուն են ուրախութեամբ եւ արցունքով: Ուրախութեամբ՝ քանի որ Տէրը մեր Եկեղեցիին շնորհեց 165 տարիներու առիթը, հետապնդելու այն տեսիլքը զոր տուաւ հիմնադիր Քառասունին, սակայն նաեւ արցունք, նման առաջին Քառասունին արցունքներուն, որ այդ տեսիլքը չհասկցունեցաւ եւ չգնահատունեցաւ այնպէս՝ որ անոր հոգեմտաւոր ազդեցութիւնը եւ արժէքը ընդհանրանային մեր հաւաքականութիւններուն եւ ազգին մէջ:

Այսօր, մենք ժամանակներ չենք տօներ, ոչ ալ ինքնորոյն համայնք մը ըլլալու իրականութիւնը կը շեշտենք. այլ՝ կ'ուզենք յիշել կեանքի որակ մը, մտքի արթնութիւն մը, սրտի ազնուութիւն մը եւ վարմունքի նուիրական սրբութիւն մը, որոնք առաջնորդ եղան առաջիններուն, եւ՝ շարունակութիւնը հանդիսացան դարերու վրայ տարածուող եւ մեզի հասնող սուրբ աւանդին, որպէսզի մենք եւս արթուն եւ զգաստ ըլլալով ջանանք նոյն տեսիլքով՝ նոյն աւանդը վեր բռնել:

Տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոս Իր առաքեալներուն յայտնեց եւ սորվեցուց, թէ տեսնուած բաները մնայունները չեն: Այսօր, մենք, որ արձանագրուած թէ՛ այսօր իսկ տեղի ունեցող պատմական դէպքերով, կրնանք տեսնել Անոր նախատեսածներուն եւ յայտնածներուն իրական որակը, անհրաժեշտ է, որ ճանչնանք Անոր սորվեցուցածին վաւերականութիւնը:

Տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոս նաեւ զգուշացուց Իր աշակերտները՝ ժամանակով սահմանափակուելու փորձութենէն: Ան զանոնք զգուշացուց նաեւ աշխարհագրական սահմաններու խաբկանքէն:



Տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոս Իր աշակերտներուն՝ Սուրբ Առաքեալներուն թելադրեց արթուն մտքով, զգաստ հոգիով եւ համբերատար կամքով սպասել Տէրոջ օրուան: Ասիկա ժամերու եւ ժամանակներու հաշիւ չի ճանչնար. ասիկա տեղի եւ ցեղի սահմաններ եւ սահմանափակումներ չունի: Եւ այս գիտակցութենէն կը ծնի Առաքեալին սա հարցումը. «Ուստի... ինչպիսի՞ մարդիկ ըլլալ կը կը վայելէ ձեզի...»:

Ահա բոլոր ճշմարիտ բարեկարգութիւններու միտք բանին: Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին շեշտած է ու կը շեշտէ Տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոսի վրայ հաստատուած գիտակից եւ գործնական հաւատքը: Զգացումները եւ ապրումները կրնան կարելոր թուիլ, սակայն անոնք չեն մեր անձերը եւ մեր շրջապատը բարեկարգելու մղիչ շարժակները: Աւանդոյթները եւ մեկնաբանութիւնները կրնան տիրական եւ համատարած երեւնալ, սակայն անոնք չեն կրնար նորոգել մեր էութիւնն ու տեսիլքը: Մշակոյթ եւ պատմութիւն կրնան ցոյց տալ

մեր ուրկէ եկած ըլլալը, սակայն անոնք չեն որ մեզ պիտի փրկեն անցեալի թէ ներկայի հոգեկան եւ բարոյական կապանքներէն: Այս յիշուածները թանկագին են եւ նուիրական, սակայն մեզի համար օրինակ ծառայելով հանդերձ, անոնք չեն կրնար մեզ ազատ ընել պատրաստուելու Տէրոջ օրում:

Տէրոջ օրում պատրաստուելու համար անհրաժեշտ է արթննալ մտքով, արմատանալ Տէրոջ Խօսքին մէջ, անկեղծօրէն ապաշխարել սխալներէն եւ կամովին դառնալ Տէրոջ ճշմարտութեան: Այլ խօսքով՝ ջանալ, ձգտիլ սրբութեան կեանք ապրելու խաղաղութիւնով: Այս՝ ամենօրեայ աշխատութիւն է, ոչ վախճանաբանական հատուցման ակնկալութիւն: Այս՝ յաւիտենական արժէք է, ոչ ժամանակագրական հաշուարկութիւն: Այս՝ օրհնեալ շնորհ է Տէրոջ ամենօրեայ ներկայութիւնով, ոչ շահուած արդիւնքի սնապարծ փառավարկ արժանիք:

Այսօր, կ'ուզենք տօնել կեանքի, ծառայութեան եւ առաջնորդութեան ա՛յս որակը: Տէրը մօտ է: Ան չ'ուշանար, այլ երկայնամիտ կ'ըլլայ. կը համերբէ եւ մեզի առիթ կը պարգեւէ, որ այս տեսիլքով բարեկարգուինք եւ բարեկարգութիւն բերենք մեր շրջապատին:

Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին թող այսօր եւս նորոգէ իր ուխտը հաւատարիմ ըլլալու այս տեսիլքին՝ իր բոլոր ծրագիրներով եւ գործունէութիւններով: Թող մեր ազգը պայծառանայ աննահանջ բարեկարգութիւնով եւ անթուլ նորարարութիւններով. թող Աստուած փառաւորուի մեր արթուն մտքերուն եւ խոնարհ հոգիներուն զգաստ յիշողութիւնով եւ սուրբ ջանքով: □

* Վեր. Մկրտիչ Գարակէօզեան նախագահն է Մերձաւոր Արեւելքի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու Միութեան: Այս պատգամը ներկայացուած է 3 Յուլիս 2011-ին, Հայաստանեայց Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիին 165-ամեակին առթիւ:

The Armenian Evangelical Church Commemorates its 165th Anniversary

On July 3, 2011, the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) celebrated the 165th Anniversary of the establishment of the Armenian Evangelical Church in Istanbul by 37 men and three women.

The 165th celebratory service took place in the First Armenian Evangelical Church, Beirut, Lebanon. Present were Archbishop Kegham Khatcherian and Vartan Ashkarian representing His Holiness Catholicos Aram I and His Beatitude Nereses Bedros XIX, respectively. The capacity audience also included Bourj Hammoud Mayor Antranig Messerlian, representatives of the Armenian Embassy, Armenian political parties and social and cultural organizations.

The service, led by Reverends Hrayr Cholakian, Raffi Messerlian, Soghomon Kilaghbian, Hovhannes Sevajian, Paul Haidostian and Vicken Cholakian, was rich with prayers, Bible passages, and hymns. The Armenian Evangelical Armiss choir, led by Conductor Garo Avessian, sang several songs, including the Lord's Prayer as composed by Armiss.

The message of this special occasion was delivered by the President of the UAECNE, Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, who focused on the quality of life, lived by the first evangelicals. "An alert mind, a kind heart, a devoted spirit, those were the virtues of our ancestors who led us by their vision, thus preparing the generations to come," said Rev. Karagoezian.

Following the service, an exhibition featuring Armenian Evangelical publications, photographs, communion and baptismal vessels and church utensils, was held at Haigazian University. University President Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian gave a brief description of the exhibit, noting that several of the utensils were used by the disciples of Rev. Armenag Haigazian, namesake of the University. He also acknowledged that some of the photographs were obtained from the collection of the late Rev. Manasseh Shnorhokian. □



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Alice Yacoubian Kahvejian

Alice Yacoubian Kahvejian passed away on June 19, 2011 in Aleppo, Syria. She was the daughter of Nouri and Aznive Yacoubian, who were active members of the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church of Aleppo.



Alice was a gregarious, fun loving and friendly person, who was well known and loved by her community. A teacher by profession, she taught at the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel School for several years. She loved children and was endowed with a talent of communicating with them. She was also an active member in the Christian Endeavor organization, and an active choir member at the Emmanuel Church.

Alice married Haygazoun Kahvejian from the Armenian Apostolic Church and also kept her membership and continued to be an active member in the Emmanuel Church. She served and helped both churches.

Alice's family had a summer home in Kessab, Syria, located between KCHAG and AGBU summer camps. Alice, being a very generous person, provided both camps with fruits from her orchards – apples, grapes and figs. Both camps benefited and enjoyed her hospitality and generosity. She will long be remembered for her kindness and benevolence.

She is survived by her sister, Anahid Yacoubian; her four daughters, Nazig, Sossi, Maria and Silva; and six grandchildren. □

Robert G. Kouyoumjian

Robert G. Kouyoumjian, PhD, professor emeritus of the Department of Engineering at Ohio State University, passed away on January 3, 2011, after a short illness. He was 87.

Professor Kouyoumjian was born in Cleveland, OH in 1923 and received his education at Harvard, MIT and Ohio State University. After receiving his PhD in physics from OSU in 1953, he taught electrical engineering at the university for over 40 years which included research at the ElectroScience Laboratory. World-renowned in his field, Professor Kouyoumjian was inducted in 1995 into the National Academy

of Engineering, the highest honor an engineer can achieve, for his work on the Uniform Geometrical Theory of Diffraction. He also received the Centennial and the Third Millennium Awards from the Institute of Electronic Engineers.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Beatrice, in 2010. He is survived by his daughter Kathryn Jones; son John D. Quimjian; stepson, Lawrence Shipp, and four grandsons.

A memorial service was held on January 8 at the Overbrook Presbyterian Church in Columbus, OH. □

Gregory S. Manoogian

Gregory S. Manoogian of Whitman, MA, nephew of Armenian Children's Milk Fund volunteers Mike and Seta Kalajian, passed away on July 21, 2011 in the Signature Healthcare Brockton Hospital. The son of Ara and Anahid "Ruthie" (Terzian) Manoogian of Whitman, Gregory was 61.

Born in Brockton, Gregory was a lifelong resident of Whitman. He was a graduate and president of his Whitman-Hanson High School class of 1968, and also a graduate of Berkeley College. Gregory worked for the Department of Defense for several years in the Quality Control Department. He was a member and Past Master of the Puritan Lodge and was the blood donation coordinator for the Lodge for many years.

Gregory was very interested in the local history and was an avid fisherman.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his sister Diana Marcotte and her husband Alan of Billerica; nephew of Gary and Alice Tavitian and Avis Sundquist all of Whitman; and several cousins.

Funeral services were held on July 26 at the Blanchard Funeral Chapel in Whitman. Burial was in the Colebrook Cemetery. □

Nancy Sagherian

Nancy Sagherian of Des Moines, Iowa passed away on September 21, 2011. She had been battling cancer for the past 14 months.

Born on September 3, 1953, in Des Moines, Nancy made a commitment in her teenage years to follow the Lord wherever He led her. At the age of 19, she went to Switzerland to work as the personal sec-



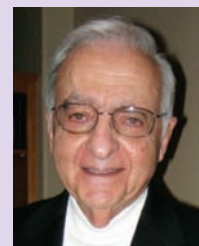
retary to the Director of Youth for Christ (YFC) International, while also working among teenagers in the International Schools. In 1978, she married John Sagherian and moved to Beirut, Lebanon, assisting John as he led the ministry of Lebanon YFC. They were a loving couple, best of friends and partners in ministry.

Nancy loved the Lord and loved telling teenagers about Him, through the ministry of YFC and her involvement in the Armenian Evangelical Church, Eshrefieh, Beirut; hosting people in her home, leading Bible studies, speaking in schools, or simply through her beautiful smile and warm affirming personality. People walked away after time with Nancy having felt welcomed and important. Only the Lord knows how many lives she touched in her lifetime.

Nancy is survived by her husband, John; two children Thia (Alistair) Dickey, in Coleraine, N. Ireland; and Jay (Lisa), in Omaha, NB. Her family has requested that any memorial contributions be made to the ministry of Lebanon Youth For Christ International, P. O. Box 4555, Englewood, CO 80155, designated for Lebanon YFC, A/c #304. □

Leo N. Shishmanian

Leo N. Shishmanian, MD, a radiologist who brought the first diagnostic imaging machines to Fresno, CA, passed away August 12, 2011 in Fresno at the age of 80. He was born in Providence, RI, the son of Peter and Virginia Shishmanian.



A graduate of the University of Rhode Island, he moved to Los Angeles for post graduate school at the University of Southern California. In 1955, he began medical school at the College of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, which later became the University of California at Irvine School of Medicine. In 1960, he and his family moved to Fresno where he opened a general practice. After five years of practicing general medicine, he began a residency in radiology at the Veterans Hospital in Long Beach.

In the early 1970s, he single handedly brought the first "CAT scan" to the San Joaquin Valley; then, in the mid-1980s, he developed the Valley's first free-standing MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) center in Fresno. He served as President of the California Radiological Society, President

of the Fresno-Madera Medical Society and was a delegate to the California Medical Association. Outside of medicine, he served on several boards, including the Fresno Opera Association, Fresno Philharmonic and the California Armenian Home.

Dr. Shishmanian is survived by his wife of 56 years, Arminee; his daughters, Cathy and her husband Dr. K.O. Crosby; Carolyn and her husband Paul Halajian; and Cindy Saavedra; his son Leo Shishmanian and his wife Andrea; ten grandchildren and his sister, Bette Gostanian.

A Mass was celebrated at St. Columba Church in Fresno on August 28. The family suggests that memorial gifts be made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), St. Agnes Hospice or to the Alzheimer's Association. □

Stepan Stepanian

Stepan Stepanian passed away on March 23, 2011 at the age of 83 after a long illness. Born in Alexandria Egypt, he was the oldest of three children born to Margos and Anahid Stepanian.



Stepan was brought up in a Christian family and attended Sunday school at the Armenian Evangelical Church in Alexandria.

After attending Armenian School, Stepan attended Scottish College in Alexandria where he gained British Matriculation and a commerce degree. As a young man, Stepan became an active member in his church, serving as a youth group leader, member of the church board and a deacon.

In the early 1950s, Stepan opened a fabric shop with his younger brother Aram John called Stepanian Frères. The business grew and Stepan handed out Christian literature to his customers. Stepan decided to move his family from Egypt to Sydney Australia in 1964. He got a job as a salesman in a department store because he could speak several languages.

In 1966, Stepan and his family, along with brother Khatchig Khatchigian, Harbig Melikoff, Hagop Kiuijian, Alice Tchasbanian, their families and others became the founding members of the Armenian Congregational Church Sydney, which later became the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sydney as it is known today. He was very active in the church.

In 1973, Stepan joined Qantas Airways and held various positions until his retirement in 1989. In 1975, Stepan asked permission from Qantas management to open a bible study group for employees and over the years many employees attended these bible study groups. In his later years, Stepan helped his older son Mark with his dental practice. Stepan would hand out Armenian Christian literature to fellow Armenians as well as English Christian literature to Australians whenever he could.

Stepan is survived by Lucy, his wife of almost 52 years; sons Mark and Garo, daughter-in-law Michele; and four grandchildren. □

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them." (Romans 13:14)

Save the Date!

January 21, 2012

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) will present Jazz sensation Grace Kelly in concert on Saturday, January 21, 2012 at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, MA. The 19 year old saxophonist, singer, composer and arranger has performed over 500 concerts and was voted Best Jazz Act in Boston for the past four years. Her latest album, *Grace*, marks a new direction for her into Gospel Jazz. For more information on Ms. Kelly, please visit her website at www.gracekellymusic.com.

Cocktails will start at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Concert at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$35 per person or \$20 for students with IDs. Proceeds from the Concert will benefit the Avedisian School in Armenia.

For more information on the Concert or how to purchase tickets, please visit www.amaa.org.



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The children look forward to receiving these packages at their annual Christmas programs.

Last year, the AMAA and the Evangelical Church of Armenia organized over 50 Christmas programs for more than 10,000 children and their families.

On behalf of our children, thank you for your continued support!

Yes, I would like to provide a blessed Christmas season for orphans and needy children.

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"As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." Matt. 25:40

